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DIRECTED INDEPENDENT LEARNING (DIL): RESOURCES for STUDENTS

Tools and resources to support the development of DIL

What is directed independent learning (DIL)?

DIL is an approach to teaching and learning that 'places increased responsibility on students when compared to the forms of learning they are most likely to have undertaken prior to entering university. But students should be engaged, enabled, facilitated and supported by staff through relevant and guided opportunities, suitable [teaching methods], and an appropriate learning environment' (Thomas 2015, pages 7 – 8). In other words, students are expected to learn how to independently analyse problems, seek out sources of reliable information and find solutions, provide rationales for their answers etc without being told how to do everything by a tutor. It involves 'learning how to learn' in a different way, and prepares students to be resourceful, creative and autonomous individuals throughout their lives, not just in their studies. As with any new approach, it helps to have some guidance, however, hence the 'directed' approach.

If you want to know more about DIL, its benefits and challenges, and the forms that support and direction can take, have a look at the 'Overview of DIL' resource. Although written for staff, the information provided is also of relevance to students.

Thomas, Liz (Ed) (2015). Compendium of effective practice in directed independent learning. QAA and Higher Education Academy. hearning. QAA and Higher Education Academy. hearning. hearning-opportunities (accessed April 2018)

What to expect at university

A series of short videos with student 'talking heads' giving advice on how HE differs from school, and how to cope

nottingham.ac.uk/studyingeffectively/studying/independent.aspx

Preparing for university study

Skills4Uni interactive student self-access mini-course skills4uni.bham.ac.uk/

If you are joining a part-time or course with other non-traditional modes of study: Flexible learning guide for students heacademy.ac.uk/knowledge-hub/flexible-learning-practical-introduction-students

Induction and transition work and resources at Swansea

Support for your studies while you are university

MyUniHub – a goldmine of information and useful stuff myuni.swan.ac.uk/

Swansea peer mentoring toolkit

Swansea info on academic mentoring

Swansea study space information

Swansea IT information

Staff guidance on online learning

Swansea Library information and guidance for students

AMOSSHE <u>resilience toolkit</u> for use with students covering emotional balance, self-management and social integration

Developing your academic and study skills

<u>Swansea Academic Success programme</u> (includes a number of study skills and 'learning how to learn' workshops) <u>swansea.ac.uk/asp/</u>

Bb Online course for students: Academic Success: Skills for Learning, Skills for Life

<u>iTest</u> (self-assessment of your 'digital literacy level') <u>wip.exeter.ac.uk/collaborate/itest/</u>

Descriptors of novice, intermediate and expert scholars' abilities for six dimensions of information and digital literacy are available in the Information and Digital Literacy Framework Sheffield University document and interactively at: Sheffield.ac.uk/library/idlt

Understanding research-informed teaching and learning

The table on the next page summarises the different modes of research informed teaching that you are likely to experience at university.

Enquiry-based learning – the student perspective

LEARN TO CRITIQUE RESEARCH

- You will learn to critically appraise research and how to move research forward, typically by participating in small group discussions with or without a tutor to consider research findings;
- Examples include critical discussions about research papers and the writing of critical literature reviews.

You do research activities

LEARN AS A RESEARCHER

- You will gain knowledge and understanding of your subject through 'enquiry-based' or research activities;
- You will actively engage with problems and issues through e.g. case studies, problem-solving activities, field trips and simulations, or through your own smallscale research project;
- You and your tutor may both be participants in the enquiry process, with your tutor acting as the more experienced research 'partner'.

You focus on research findings

ENQUIRE & REFLECT ON TEACHING & LEARNING

- Tutors may undertake research into their own teaching, and seek your input and views as data for
- You may be asked to critically reflect on how you learn, and how you could become a better learner:
- You may be asked to give feedback on your learning experiences through questionnaires, interviews or focus groups, or to keep a reflective portfolio;
- You adopt a research mindset towards learning and teaching.

You focus on research processe

LEARN ABOUT RESEARCH FINDINGS

- You will learn about the research findings of others, including your tutors, and gather examples & ways of illustrating concepts & theories;
- Teaching may be through lectures, set reading or online content that informs you about what you need to know, as well as you seeking information yourselves about the research of staff who teach you.

You listen to and read about others' research activities

LEARN ABOUT RESEARCH PROCESSES

- You will learn about the ways in which knowledge is produced. E.g. critically consider research methods presented in research papers & academic books;
- You may be preparing to undertake your own research for a project or dissertation, and selecting your own research methods;
- Tutors may encourage you to 'think as' researchers, and not simply accept others' research methods.

Extract from 'Cultivating student expectations of a research-informed curriculum: Developing and promoting pedagogic resonance in the undergraduate student learning pathway' McLinden, M. and Edwards, C. (2017) In Developing the **Higher Education** Curriculum: Research -Based Education in Practice. Eds. Carnell, B and Fung, D. pages 14 - 30. Available under a Creative Commons license from ucl.ac.uk/uclpress/browsebooks/developingthe-highereducationcurriculum